

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07089 01 OF 02 291410Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPTA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 SY-05
MCT-02 FBOE-00 AGR-01 STR-07 IO-13 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05
CAB-02 DOTE-00 FAA-00 OC-06 CCO-00 WRDE-00 AID-05
ACDA-12 PC-01 /143 W

-----018025 291422Z /46

P R 282149Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9211
USINT HAVANA
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
USSOUTHCOM
AMCONSUL CALIPOUCH
AMCONSUL BARRANQUILLA POUCH
AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 7089

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CO
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SUMMARIES: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENTIAL-ELECT TURBAY, HAVING RETURNED TO COLOMBIA TO RECEIVE HIS OFFICIAL CREDENTIALS, BRIEFLY OUTLINED SOME OF HIS ADMINISTRATION'S LIKELY PRIORITIES IN A PRESS INTERVIEW. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BARRY CONCLUDED A SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO BOGOTA DURING WHICH HE DISCUSSED UNGA ISSUES WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND EMBASSY OFFICERS. FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO MADE RELATIVELY UNPUBLICIZED VISIT TO CUBA. THE ISSUE OF COLOMBIA'S RIGHTS IN THE PANAMA CANAL WAS REVIVED BY NEW CHARGES AGAINST PRESIDENT LOPEZ. AS EXPECTED, LABOR UNIONS USING THE CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATIONS TO PRESS THEIR DEMANDS ARE CAUSING AN INCREASE IN PRE-INAUGURATION STRIKES.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07089 01 OF 02 291410Z

THE EMBASSY SUFFERED VERY MINOR BOMB DAMAGE BY AN AS YET UNIDENTIFIED ASSAILANT, BUT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES OTHERWISE WERE AT A RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL. END SUMMARY.

2. TURBAY RETURNS TO RECEIVE CREDENTIALS: PRESIDENT-ELECT JULIO CESAR TURBAY RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO EUROPE AND VENEZUELA ON JULY 26 AND RECEIVED HIS OFFICIAL CRE-

DENTIALS FROM THE ELECTORIAL COURT ON JULY 28. DURING A PRESS INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE JULY 27 EDITION OF EL ESPECTADOR, TURBAY OUTLINED SOME OF HIS ADMINISTRATIONS'S LIKELY PRIORITIES. WHILE ADMITTING THAT HE HAD NO MIRACULOUS REMEDIES FOR COLOMBIA'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ILLS, THE PRESIDENT-ELECT REAFFIRMED HIS CAMPAIGN PLEDGE TO STIMULATE PRODUCTION THROUGH TAX INCENTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT CREDITS. TURBAY ALSO SPOKE OF THE NEED FOR DECENTRALIZED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNAL SECURITY, AND THE MASSIVE CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT. REGARDING THIS LATTER SUBJECT, HE REFERRED TO HIS RECENT TALKS WITH VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT PEREZ, WHICH INCLUDED A DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR BORDER AREAS. THE PRESS INTERVIEW CONCLUDED WITH A DISCUSSION OF TURBAY'S APPROVAL OF THE IDEA OF A COFFEE STABILIZATION AGREEMENT, HIS PLANS TO COMBAT INFLATION BY STIMULATING PRODUCTION, AND HIS INTENTION TO SEEK GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADERSHIP.

3. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY VISITS BOGOTA: DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS ROBERT BARRY VISITED BOGOTA FROM JULY 23 TO JULY 25 AND HELD PRE-33RD UNGA CONSULATIONS WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS AND COLOMBIAN FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS. THESE DISCUSSION TOOK ON GREATER THAN USUAL IMPORTANCE, GIVEN THE FACT THAT COLOMBIA FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO WILL BE PRESIDENT OF THE GA. THE MAJOR TOPICS COVERED DURING THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 07089 01 OF 02 291410Z

VISIT WERE: NAMIBIA, MIDDLE EAST, CREATION OF POST OF UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, PUERTO RICO, GEOSYNCHRONOUS ORBIT, NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, OVERVIEW COMMITTEE, COMMON FUND, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND ILLICIT PAYMENTS. (BOGOTA 6930 REPORTS POSITIONS TAKEN BY GOC.)

4. CONCERN CONTINUES OVER COLOMBIAN RIGHTS IN PANAMA CANAL: A COLOMBIAN LAWYER HAS ACCUSED PRESIDENT LOPEZ OF TREASON BEFORE THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR ALLEGEDLY FAILING TO PROTECT COLOMBIA'S RIGHTS IN THE PANAMA CANAL. THE CHARGE, WHICH WILL BE STUDIED BY THE CHAMBER SHORTLY, REVIVES THE CONTROVERSY RAISED BY THE NEW U.S. - PANAMA CANAL TREATIES, WHICH ABROGATED THE THOMSON-URRUTIA TREATY GRANTING COLOMBIA CERTAIN RIGHTS REGARDING THE CANAL. LOPEZ HAS DEFENDED HIS ROLE IN THE US-PANAMA NEGOTIATIONS, CITING THE JULY 14 DECLARATION SIGNED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER IN PANAMA AS A FURTHER ASSURANCE THAT COLOMBIA'S CANAL RIGHTS WILL BE RE-CONFIRMED BY A NEW AGREEMENT WITH PANAMA. COMMENT: THE CHARGE OF TREASON UNDOUBTEDLY WILL DIE IN CONGRESS, BUT SOME COLOMBIANS WILL NOT REST EASY UNTIL A NEW AGREEMENT WITH PANAMA IS ACTUALLY SIGNED.

5. COLOMBIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS CUBA: FOREIGN
MINISTER LIEVANO WAS IN CUBA FROM JULY 23-27, THE FIRST
COLOMBIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TO VISIT THAT NATION SINCE
1959. THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIP, WHICH HAS RECEIVED
UNUSUALLY LITTLE PUBLICITY HERE, WAS NOT OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED,
ALTHOUGH MEDIA REPORTS MAINTAINED THAT CASTRO HAD INVITED
LIEVANO TO ATTEND CEREMONIES COMMEMORATING CUBA'S JULY 26
ANNIVERSARY. THE VISIT FOLLOWS CLOSELY THE SIGNING OF A
CULTURAL-EDUCATIONAL AGREEMENT WITH CUBA DURING A VISIT
BY COLOMBIA'S EDUCATION MINISTER (BOGOTA 6643). COMMENT:
FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES HAVE NOT YET COMMENTED ON LIEVANO'S
VISIT. PRIOR TO THE MINISTER'S DEPARTURE, HOWEVER, ONE
HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL DID SAY THAT COLOMBIAN-CUBAN RELATIONS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 07089 01 OF 02 291410Z

HAD NEVER BEEN MORE CORDIAL (BOGOTA 6777).

6. PRE-INAUGURATION STRIKE ACTIVITY INCREASES: AS IS NORMAL
IN TRANSITION PERIODS BETWEEN COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENTS, STRIKE
ACTIVITY IS ON THE UPSWING. MUCH OF IT INVOLVES PUBLIC
EMPLOYEES PROTESTING DELAYS IN PAYMENT OF SALARIES OR
INCREASES. LEFTIST UNIONS ARE INVOLVED IN SOME OF THE
DISPUTES. SO FAR, STRIKES HAVE BEEN CALLED, OR ARE IN
PROGRESS, INVOLVING TEACHERS, BANK EMPLOYEES, DOCTORS, AND
CIVIL AVIATION EMPLOYEES. AIR TRAFFIC AT BOGOTA, MEDELLIN
AND CALI AIRPORTS WAS HAMPERED BY SLOWDOWNS, WORK-TO-RULE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 07089 02 OF 02 291334Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPTA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 SY-05
MCT-02 FBOE-00 AGR-01 STR-07 IO-13 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05
CAB-02 DOTE-00 FAA-00 OC-06 CCO-00 WRDE-00 AID-05
ACDA-12 PC-01 /143 W

-----017921 291421Z /46

P R 282149Z JUL 78

FM AMEMASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9212
USINT HAVANA
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
USSOUTHCOM
AMCONSUL BARRANQUILLA POUCH
AMCONSUL CALI POUCH
AMCONSUL MEDELLIN POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BOGOTA 7089

ACTIONS AND WORKER ASSEMBLIES DEMANDING OVERDUE PAY. A STRIKE AT BARRANQUILLA AIRPORT, DURING PRESIDENT-ELECT TURBAY'S STOPOVER THERE, WAS AVOIDED AT THE LAST MINUTE BY A PROMISE OF IMMEDIATE PAYMENT OF OVERDUE AMOUNTS. ALSO, WORKERS AT UNIROYAL'S CALI TIRE PLANT AND BOGOTA SHOE FACTORY HAVE BEEN ON STRIKE SINCE JULY 5 AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE BOGGED DOWN AT B.F. GOODRICH'S COLOMBIAN TIRE SUBSIDIARY, ICOLLANTAS.

7. U.S. EMBASSY SUFFERS MINOR BOMB DAMAGE. A LOW-LEVEL BOMB EXPLODED AGAINST THE U.S. EMBASSY'S OUTER WALL ON JULY 23. THERE WERE NO INJURIES AND ONLY SLIGHT PHYSICAL DAMAGE. SEVERAL ANONYMOUS CALLERS CLAIMED THAT THE PEKING-ORIENTED POPULAR LIBERATION ARMY (EPL) WAS RESPONSIBLE, BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM THIS CLAIM (BOGOTA 6875). IN A SIMILAR, BUT MORE SERIOUS INCIDENT IN MEDELLIN, THE COLOMBIAN-SOVIET ASSOCIATION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 07089 02 OF 02 291334Z

HEADQUARTERS REPORTEDLY WAS BOMBED AND THE ORGANIZATION'S SECRETARY-GENERAL SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. NO GROUP HAS YET TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK. A 15-MAN GUERRILLA TEAM FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA (FARC) KILLED FOUR INDIVIDUALS THIS WEEK DURING AN ATTACK IN THE TROUBLED CIMITARRA AREA OF SANTANDER. IN BOGOTA, THE M-19 TERRORIST GROUP SEIZED A SCHOOL BUS ON JULY 26 AND LECTURED THE STUDENTS ON THE SUPPOSED EVILS OF THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE NEED FOR GUERRILLA WARFARE. A JULY 25 ARTICLE ON KIDNAPPINGS THAT APPEARED IN "EL TIEMPO" CONTAINED A FIGURE OF 703 OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED KIDNAPPINGS IN COLOMBIA DURING THE LAST 15 YEARS. COMMENT: THIS FIGURE IS PROBABLY LOW SINCE MANY KIDNAPPINGS ARE NOT REPORTED BY FAMILIES WHO BELIEVE THE VICTIM'S LIFE IS FURTHER ENDANGERED WHEN THE AUTHORITIES BECOME INVOLVED.
DREXLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BOGOTA07089
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780311-1323
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978076/aaaaaezv.tel
Line Count: 217
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 82079e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2007107
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL SUMMARIES: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA
TAGS: PINT, CO
To: STATE HAVANA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/82079e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014